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amount of animal life which can be sustained upon a small area, under suitable conditions, can only be understood by those who have dredged near the hundred fathom line on the west coast of the great Florida plateau. The dredge not unfrequently brings up large fragments of modern limestone, consisting of the dead carcasses of the species now living on the top.

The *Challenger* and *Tuscarora* soundings have shown the existence of submarine elevations of volcanic origin, forming extensive banks, serving as foundations for barrier reefs and atolls, and wherever such plateaux reach, on their windward side, a level at which corals prosper, there coral reefs spring up and flourish. At lower levels are plateaux where mollusks, corals, echinoderms, etc., find the materials necessary for their coverings. These great submarine beds of modern limestone lie in the very track of the ocean currents, and gain from them the carbonate of lime they require. Murray's experiments seem to prove that this amounts to sixteen tons for every square mile a hundred fathoms deep. The foundation for a coral reef is formed by the accumulation of limestone and other animal remains upon an early fold of the earth's crust, or upon a volcanic plateau, and corals do not encrust the surface until the bank has risen to their bathymetrical limit. Thus the deposition of animal débris comes in as a supplement to elevation and subsidence, which alone were taken note of by the theory of Darwin and Dana, and accounts for the raising of plateaux in regions where there has been little or no change of level from other causes, to a height favorable for the growth of reef-building corals.

GROFF'S MINERAL ANALYSIS.¹—This is a series of one hundred octavo pages giving blanks for the student to fill out under the different physical characters and chemical reactions of minerals. They are conveniently arranged and accompanied by a syllabus of terms most commonly used in describing minerals. It will be found useful in laboratory work.

RECENT BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

- Upham, Warren.*—Lake Agassiz, a chapter in Glacial Geology. Ext. Bull. Minn. Acad. N. S., Vol. II. From the author.
- Harger, Oscar.*—Report on the Isopoda. Bull. Mus. Comp. Anat., Vol. XI, No. 4. Cambridge, 1883. From the author.
- Dewey, F. P.*—Porosity and specific gravity of Coke. Ext. Trans. Amer. Inst. Mining Eng., 1883.
- Hunt, A. E.*—Some notes and tests of an open-hearth steel charge made for boiler plate. Ext. idem.
- Stone, G. C.*—The determination of Manganese in Spinel. Ext. idem.
- Brinton, D. G.*—The Folk-lore of Yucatan. Ext. from the Folk-lore Journal, Vol. I, Pt. VIII, London, Eng., 1883. From the author.
- Allen A.*—The Journal of the Postal Microscopical Society, London, 1883. From the editor.

¹ *Mineral Analysis.* Designed by Professor Geo. G. Groff, M.D. Second edition. Lewisburg, Pa., Science and Health Publishing Co., 1883. 8vo.

- White, J. W.*—First aid to the Injured. Abstract of lectures delivered to the police of Phila. From the author.
- Boehm, G.*—Literaturbericht für Zoologie in Beziehung zur Anthropologie mit Einschluss der fossilen Landsaugethiere. Abh. Arch. für Anthropologie. München, 1883. From the author.
- Hoffmann, C. K.*—Dr. H. G. Bronn's Klassen und Ordnungen des Thier-Reichs. v Band, II Abth. Arthropoda. VI Band, III Abth. Reptilien.
- Leche, W.*—Zur Anatomie der Becken region bei Insectivora, Stockholm, 1883. From the author.
- Gregorio, M. A.*—Intorne alla Pubblicazione di un gran Giornale Geologico Internazionale. From the author,
- Agassiz, A.*—Exploration of the surface fauna of the Gulf Stream. Vol. III, Part I. The Porpitidae and Velellidae. Cambridge, 1883. From the author.
- Cragin, F. W.*—A contribution to the history of the fresh-water Copepoda. Ext. Trans. Kansas Acad. Sci., 1883. From the author.

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GENERAL NOTES.

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.¹

THE DUTCH CIRCUMPOLAR EXPEDITION.—On July 5, 1882, the Dutch expedition embarked on the Norwegian steamer *Varna*. Before the end of August the *Varna* was surrounded by ice at about 70° N. lat. and 63° E. long. On September 18th the Danish steamer *Dijmphna* perceived the ship and attempted to render aid, but was itself surrounded by ice, and soon both ships were frozen in at about seventy-five yards distance from each other. At the commencement of October enormous crevasses opened in the ice, heralded by loud noises of cracking and splitting, and the crew, who at the first warning had left the ship, found themselves completely separated from it. After the crevasses had frozen over, the crew regained the ship, and continued observations until Christmas eve, when the ice floes again put themselves in motion, crashing against each other with such force that the *Varna* was literally crushed. The crew escaped with safety, and with their documents, instruments, dogs and sledges, took refuge on board the *Dijmphnu*, the solid construction of which enabled it to resist the movement of the ice.

Here they were compelled to remain until August 1st, when, as the *Dijmphna* had orders to spend a second winter in the Arctic, they made for the land by means of boats and sledges, and reached Waigatz island in three weeks. Here they fell in with the *Louise*, the *Nordenskjold* and the *Obi*, all sent in search of the *Varna*. All collections and papers were saved; and not one of the crew was lost, in spite of the hardships endured.

AFRICA.—*The Dunes of the Sahara.*—Not more than a ninth part of the surface of the Sahara is occupied by sand-dunes, the principal groups of which are in the north of that desert, and are those of Erg, in the Algerian Sahara, that of Iguidi, which

¹ This department is edited by W. N. LOCKINGTON, Philadelphia.